

## Message Text

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ACTION EUR-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SAJ-01 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-07 H-03

INR-11 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-07 PA-04 RSC-01 PRS-01 SP-03

SS-20 CU-05 SSO-00 NSCE-00 INRE-00 NIC-01 SAM-01

DRC-01 SCS-03 SCA-01 SY-04 EURE-00 /103 W

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O P 161435Z SEP 74

FM AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 2529

INFO AMEMBASSY BONN

AMEMBASSY OSLO

AMCONSUL LENINGRAD

USIA WASHDC PRIORITY

C O N F I D E N T I A L MOSCOW 14016

E. O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, UR, US

SUBJ: PROTEST ON ROUGHING UP OF U.S. CORRESPONDENTS

REF: MOSCOW 13964

1. I DELIVERED ORAL STATEMENT PROTESTING ROUGHING UP OF U.S. CORRESPONDENTS AT ABORTED ART EXHIBIT (REFTEL) AT 4:00 P.M. LOCAL TO ACTING CHIEF OF MFA USA DIVISION MIKHAYLOV. TEXT OF ORAL STATEMENT FOLLOWS:

2. BEGIN TEXT. ON SUNDAY AFTERNOON, SEPTEMBER 15, A NUMBER OF AMERICAN CORRESPONDENTS WERE AT A FIELD NEAR THE BELYAYEVA METRO STATION FOR THE PURPOSE OF COVERING AN OPEN-AIR ART EXHIBIT. THE EXHIBIT, WHICH WAS TO INCLUDE THE WORKS OF SOVIET ARTISTS OF INTERNATIONAL NOTE, WAS AN EVENT OF LEGITIMATE CULTURAL AND JOURNALISTIC INTEREST. THE ACTION OF THE AUTHORITIES TO STOP IT, DETAIN THE PARTICIPANTS, AND DAMAGE AND DESTROY WORKS OF ART WAS ALSO A SIGNIFICANT AND LEGITIMATE NEWS STORY.

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3. AMERICAN CORRESPONDENTS AT THE SCENE WERE APPROACHED BY A THROG OF MEN IN CIVILIAN CLOTHES AND WERE PUSHED AND STRUCK. ONE WOMAN CORRESPONDENT WAS PUSHED AND STRUCK TO THE GROUND. ANOTHER CORRESPONDENT'S CAMERA WAS PUSHED INTO HIS FACE. AN AMERICAN CONSUL WHO ENDEAVORED TO INTERVENE TO PROTECT THE AMERICAN CITIZENS ASKED THE ASSAILANTS THE AUTHORITY UNDER WHICH THEY WERE ACTING. THE ASSAILANTS EITHER DECLINED TO IDENTIFY THEMSELVES OR WOULD IDENTIFY THEMSELVES ONLY AS KOMSOMOL MEMBERS.

4. WHILE THE CORRESPONDENTS WERE BEING PUSHED AND STRUCK, UNIFORMED MILITIAMEN WERE STANDING IN THE STREET AND SITTING IN A MILITIA VEHICLE NO MORE THAN 20 METERS AWAY. THEY TOOK NO ACTION TO PROTECT THE CORRESPONDENTS OR TO RESTORE ORDER FOR SOME TIME, UNTIL ONE OFFICER WHO HAD BEEN STANDING IN THE STREET WALKED OVER TO INQUIRE WHAT WAS HAPPENING.

5. THE EMBASSY OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA STRONGLY PROTESTS THE VIOLENT TREATMENT OF THE AMERICAN CORRESPONDENTS, WHO WERE PERFORMING THEIR LEGITIMATE JOURNALISTIC FUNCTION, AND THE FAILURE OF THE UNIFORMED MILITIA TO PROTECT THEM FROM SUCH VIOLENCE. THE EMBASSY EXPECTS THE MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS TO PROVIDE A FULL EXPLANATION FOR THIS UNACCEPTABLE BEHAVIOR. THE EMBASSY FURTHER EXPECTS THAT THE ASSAILANTS WILL BE BROUGHT TO JUSTICE; IN THIS CONNECTION, THE AMERICAN CORRESPONDENTS ARE PREPARED TO HELP IDENTIFY THE OFFENDERS AND TO PROVIDE PHOTOGRAPHS OF SEVERAL OF THEM. FINALLY, THE EMBASSY REQUESTS THE MINISTRY TO ENSURE THAT THE SOVIET POLICE AUTHORITIES ARE FULLY INFORMED OF THEIR DUTY TO PROTECT AMERICAN JOURNALISTS FROM VIOLENCE AND THAT STEPS ARE TAKEN TO PREVENT A RECURRENCE OF SUCH TREATMENT OF AMERICAN JOURNALISTS IN THE USSR. END TEXT.

6. AFTER READING ORAL STATEMENT, I SAID THAT EVERY TIME U.S. CORRESPONDENTS ARE TREATED IN THIS WAY, THE RESULT IS ADVERSE PUBLICITY IN THE U.S. ABOUT THE USSR AND A COMPLICATION IN OUR JOINT EFFORTS FOR IMPROVED RELATIONSHIP. I ADDED THAT, IN THIS CASE, THE ASSAILANTS SEEMED CLEARLY TO BE ACTING WITH THE PERMISSION -- AND PERHAPS AT THE INSTIGATION --OF THE AUTHORITIES WHO WERE STANDING AROUND.

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7. MIKHAYLOV PROFESSED NO KNOWLEDGE OF THE INCIDENT AND SAID THE MFA WOULD LOOK INTO IT. HE ASKED WHAT THE U.S. CONSUL WAS DOING THERE. I REPLIED THAT HE HAD GONE WITH HIS FAMILY TO SEE THE EXHIBIT.

8. AN INTERPRETER IN FRG EMBASSY WAS ALSO ROUGHED UP, AND EMBASSY HAS ASKED BONN FOR INSTRUCTIONS; GERMAN EMBOFF TELLS

US HE EXPECTS HIS EMBASSY TO MAKE SOME FORM OF PROTEST.  
NORWEGIAN EMBASSY, ONE OF WHOSE OFFICERS WAS ALSO INVOLVED IN  
THE SCUFFLE, IS ALSO CONSIDERING A PROTEST. ONE AMERICAN  
CORRESPONDENT, PRESENT BUT NOT MANHANDLED, HAS WRITTEN A NOTE  
TO ALL BUREAU CHIEFS ASKING THEM TO ENSURE A U.S. EMBASSY PROTEST,  
TO SEND A JOINTLY SIGNED WRITTEN PROTEST TO MFA PRESS DEPART-  
MENT AND TO BOYCOTT UPCOMING MFA KRIVOI ROG TRIP.

9. AMERICAN CORRESPONDENT REPORTS ORGANIZED PLANNING TO  
ATTEMPT EXHIBIT AT SAME PLACE NOON SEPT 29.

10. I RECOMMEND DEPARTMENT'S FOLLOWING UP OUR PROTEST WITH  
SOVIET EMBASSY.  
DUBS

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NNN

## Message Attributes

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**Decaption Date:** 01 JAN 1960  
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**Disposition Case Number:** n/a  
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